



*FAMILY HOLIDAY FUN*

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## **CRAFTS WITH CHILDREN**

1. Pick a relaxed time to work on crafts and art activities.
2. Assemble all materials first. (Kids can help.)
3. Protect work area with newspapers or vinyl tablecloth.
4. Know the amount of mess you can handle.
5. Be clear with instructions and any "adults only" steps.
6. Let the kids be creative and come up with their own ideas.
7. Have fun!

## **THINGS TO SAVE FOR ART & CRAFT PROJECTS**

cardboard tubes

shoe boxes

"sewing scraps"

trims, buttons,

fabric pieces

popsicle sticks

baby wipe boxes

brown paper bags

small plastic tubs with lids

cereal boxes for cardboard

boxes in unusual shapes

extra gift wrap

holiday or birthday cards

coffee cans

paper plates, cups

## **ART BOXES**

Store all your art and craft supplies together. Keep the odds and ends you recycle for crafts in one box and basic art supplies (crayons, scissors, glue, construction paper, etc.) in another box. Toy boxes can be very strong and make good storage boxes. Baby wipe boxes also are good for storing crayons and other basic supplies.

## WRAPPING PAPER

### **materials**

brown craft paper or roll of plain white paper  
paint  
sponges, cookie cutters or stencils

### **instructions**

Roll out a large length of paper. Cut. Paint with designs made by dipping sponges cut into holiday shapes or cookie cutters into paint and then printing on paper.

Or, place stencil on paper and sponge paint or paint with brush.

**To make *potato prints*, cut a potato in half. Cut a design on each side (simple shapes work best). Cut away potato around the design, leaving a raised design in the center. Dip potato lightly in paint, dab off excess. Print! Note: *this should be done only by an adult or child over 12***

## GIFT BAGS

### **materials**

empty boxes in sizes like the ones for crackers pipe cleaners or yarn construction paper

### **instructions**

Cut off top flaps on boxes. Cover boxes with construction or other decorative paper. Punch two holes about 3 inches apart from each other at the top of each long side. Tie pipe cleaner or yarn from hole to hole for each side. Decorate boxes.

### **more ideas**

Use child's art work to cover boxes. Use wrapping paper described previously to cover boxes.

## BAKER'S CLAY FOR ORNAMENTS

### **materials**

4 cups flour  
1 cup salt  
1 1/2 cups cold water

### **directions**

Stir flour and salt together. Add cold water and mix until well blended, kneed with your hands about 5 minutes until dough is smooth and easy to work with.

On a floured surface, roll out dough 1/2 inch thick. Cut out shapes with cookie cutters. Make a hole in the top of the ornament by poking a straw through it.

Bake in a pre-heated 350 degree oven for about 50 minutes.

Paint and decorate when cool.

### **more ideas**

Older children can make their own designs by hand.

To make beads, roll clay into balls and poke a straw completely through.

## CARDBOARD ORNAMENTS

### **materials**

construction or other colored paper  
cardboard  
(use empty cereal boxes)  
cookie cutters

### **instructions**

Trace cookie cutters to make three shapes: two on colored paper and one on cardboard. Glue a colored paper shape on each side of cardboard shape.

Punch hole in top and decorate.

### **more ideas**

Glue glitter or ribbon along edges of ornaments.

Use this same method to make large designs and decorate windows, doors, etc.

## BAG A WREATH

### **materials**

two paper grocery bags 8  
pipe cleaners or ribbon

### **instructions**

Cut off narrow panels on sides of bags and lay bags on top of each other with print sides facing inward. Roll bag, starting at one long side and twist entire roll. Tuck one end inside the other and form a circle. Twist pipe cleaners around bag, equally spaced or tie ribbon around bag wreath at equal distances. Curl ends of ribbon or twist ends of pipe cleaner around fingers for loops.

### **more ideas**

You can use this same technique with lunch bags for smaller wreaths. Lunch bags are also easier to roll and twist for pre-schoolers.

## HANDPRINT WREATH

### **materials**

green construction paper  
posterboard

### **instructions**

Trace hands of all family members on green construction paper. Cut out hands. Place hands in a circle on the posterboard. Play with placement. Have fingers pointing both in and out, overlap hand prints. When you find the placement you like for your wreath, glue down handprints.

Add decorations, message to posterboard or handprint wreath.

### **more ideas**

Write names, dates on hands.

## COTTONBALL WREATH PAINTING

### materials

cotton balls green paint  
pencil with eraser red  
paint

### instructions

Dip cotton ball in green paint.  
Lightly dab in circle shape to make  
wreath. Dab until dry so you have  
different shades of green. Dip and  
dab again until wreath is finished.  
Dip eraser end of pencil in red  
paint and dot on top of green for  
berries.

### more ideas

Make wreath designs this way on a  
large piece of paper or on a brown  
grocery bag cut open for wrapping  
paper.

## TISSUE PAPER WREATH

### materials

green and red tissue paper  
paper plate

### instructions

Cut tissue paper into squares. (You'll  
need more green than red.) Cut out  
center of paper plate and use rim  
as the back for the wreath. Crumple  
green tissue paper squares and  
glue on paper plate rim until  
covered. Crumple red tissue squares  
for berries and glue on groups of  
three.

### more ideas

Do not cut out center of paper  
plate, but still decorate outside rim  
only. Write a holiday greeting  
inside the wreath.

## SNOWMAN MOBILE

### **materials**

white construction paper  
black construction paper  
black yarn

### **instructions**

Trace three circles on white paper. (Use cans, glasses, etc. for circles.) Punch a hole at the top and bottom of each circle. Cut out a top hat shape from the black paper and punch hole in top and bottom.

Make a loop at one end of the piece of yarn. Line up hat and circles. Thread yarn over hat and in and out of the holes on circles. Yarn will show between circles. Knot yarn at bottom circle. Hang from loop at the top of the hat.

Give the snowman eyes, noses, buttons and other decorations with markers or crayons.

### **more ideas**

If you don't have a hole punch, carefully poke holes using a very sharp pencil. Or you can cut a small X with the tip of sharp scissors to make opening. (Adults or older children only.)

## PASTA SNOWFLAKES

### **materials**

wheel-shaped pasta  
white glue waxed  
paper string

### **instructions**

Arrange pieces of pasta in snowflake shape on waxed paper. (Hint: start at the center and work outward.) Glue pieces together where pasta circles touch. When glue is completely dry, lift off paper and add string.

### **more ideas**

After snowflake is glued together, brush on more glue and sprinkle with glitter.

If you don't have waxed paper, try tin foil.

## NEW YEAR'S EVE CRACKERS

### **materials**

toilet paper tubes construction or tissue paper ribbon or string surprises: small size candy (like wrapped chocolate kisses)

### **directions**

Cut a piece of paper large enough to extend at least 3 inches past the end of the tube and to wrap around the tube. T Glue and tape down paper around the tube. Tie shut one end. Fill tube with small pieces of candy. Tie shut other end.

To open: pull at each end in the opposite direction. The cracker will pop open.

### **more ideas**

Include a note with a special New Year's wish for the child.

## New Year's Eve Shakers

### **materials**

two plastic or Styrofoam cups rice or dry beans or small pasta masking or electrical tape

### **instructions**

Fill one cup with rice/beans/pasta or a combination. Place the second cup over it and tape together securely. Decorate and shake!

### **more ideas**

Fill small plastic tub with lid (like for margarine or yogurt). Tape down lid.

## NEW YEAR'S EVE PINATA

### **materials**

grocery-size brown paper bag crepe paper streamers ribbon or string (36" long) surprises: small toys or candy

### **instructions**

Cut fringe on one side of crepe paper streamers. Stand bag opened and glue on solid edges of streamers until bag is covered. (Hint: start at bottom and work up.) Fill bag about 1/3 full of treats. Gather top of bag and tie tightly with ribbon. Use long ends of ribbon to hang bag.

### **more ideas**

Each child makes a New Year's wish before his/her turn.

## HELPING HANDS

### **materials**

paper in any color  
yarn  
or stapler markers

### **instruction**

Child traces his hand several times on paper. Cut out each one. On each one, child writes one way she or he can help someone (a favor, good deed or extra chore). Decorate one hand, including the words "helping hands" for the cover. Put hands together and staple or tie together at the wrist. ***This is a great gift ideal Kids can give one to a parent or to each other.***

## HANDPRINT PLACEMATS

### **materials**

large size piece of construction paper and other strips of construction paper

### **instructions**

To weave *placemat*, fold large piece of construction paper with short ends together. Draw lines from center to 1 inch before edges, 1 inch apart. Starting at folded center, cut along lines, stopping at least one inch before edges. Unfold large piece for base of placemat. Cut other construction paper into one inch strips. Weave strips in and out of placemat. Glue down edges.

*To trim with handprints*, trace and cut out several handprints. Glue wrist-side of handprints to the back of placemat so that the handprints stick out to make a design or fringe along the short side of the placemats.

### **more ideas**

Use red and green Christmas. For Kwanzaa, black, red and green.

## **FAMILY NIGHT ACTIVITIES**

### MOVIE NIGHT

Rent a video or watch a holiday movie or special on TV *together*. Pop popcorn or make Rice Krispy treats or whatever family favorite you enjoy. Turn off the lights. Sit close. Everybody puts their PJ's on first.

### HOMEMADE HAPPY MEALS

Decorate paper lunch bags with word searches, mazes, pictures to color. Write down a joke or riddle. Make your own or cut out of coloring books or magazines. Fill with sandwiches, fruit, etc. Add a treat (like a cookie) and a very small "prize." This is also a fun thing to do for a long holiday drive. You can pack lunch or just car snacks.

### GAME NIGHT

Play card games, board games or put together a puzzle. Have a snack. Play background music if you like *but keep the TV off!*

### GAME NIGHT II: CHARADES

Divide into teams. Older kids can go against adults but small children and adults should be mixed together. Each team makes a list of five titles in three categories: movies, TV shows and people. Write each title on a separate piece of paper. Teams will pick from the other team's list but their team will try to guess the answer. Each team member tries to act out the title word by word. Other members try to guess the title in two minutes. Note: you can make up your own categories and time limits.

## COOKING WITH KIDS

Bake a cake and decorate it with holiday candies.  
Each person makes their favorite dish for dinner.  
Make Christmas cookies. Decorate bags and boxes and give as gifts.

### Loving Cups

*ingredients:*

*one package refrigerated sugar cookie dough  
miniature peanut butter cups mini muffin pan*

*Spray or butter mini muffin pan.*

*Cut cookie dough into 1/4" slices.*

*Roll slices into balls and place in mini muffin pan.*

*Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes, until dough puffs up.*

*Place miniature peanut butter cup in center of each cookie.*

*Return to oven for another 2 minutes.*

*Cool completely*

## INDOOR PICNIC

Have fun (and make dinner easy on you, too) by going on an indoor picnic. Spread a sheet on the floor. Serve hot dogs sandwiches along with some fruit and macaroni & cheese or whatever your family likes that's quick and easy. Serve on paper plates for fast and easy clean up.

## STORY TIMES

- Read to your kids 15 minutes or one book each night. \*Read a chapter a night from a book all your kids can enjoy. \*Older kids take a turn reading.
- **Tell** a fairy tale or folktale. (Hint: you can read the book first to refresh your memory. Add a few details of your own and ham it up!)
- Read a different Christmas story each night on the week before Christmas.

*suggested holiday reading...*

The Polar Express Chris van Allsburg

Edward and the Book of Names David McPhail

Harvey Slumfenburger's Christmas Present John Burningham

Merry Christmas. Strega Nona Tomie de Paolo

Max's Christmas Rosemary Wells

Corduroy's Christmas Don Freeman

Merry Christmas. Amelia Bedila Peggy Parish

Nate the Great's Christmas Caper Majorie Sharmat

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Barbara Robinson

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